

ENTOMOLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS OF CAPTAIN COOK

Captain James Cook, of the Royal Navy and Fellow of the Royal Society, sailed westward on March 31, 1770, from Cape Farewell in New Zealand, coming in sight of New South Wales on April 19 and anchoring in Botany Bay on April 28. After collecting a large quantity of plants on the shore, his expedition proceeded on May 6 to sail further along the coast of New South Wales stopping at various places for exploration. At one such place beyond Cape Capricorn, it is stated by Andrew Kippis, Cook's biographer, that—"In proceeding up the country they found gum trees, the gum upon which existed only in very small quantities. Gum trees of a similar kind, and as little productive, had occurred in other parts of the coast of New South Wales. Upon the branches of the trees were ants' nests, made of clay, as big as a bushel. The ants themselves, by which the nests were inhabited, were small, and their bodies white. Upon another species of the gum tree was found a small black ant, which perforated all the twigs, and, having worked out the pith, occupied the pipe in which it had been contained. Notwithstanding this, the parts in which these insects, to an amazing number, had formed a lodgment, bore leaves and flowers, and appeared to be entirely in a flourishing state. Butterflies were found in such multitudes, that the account of them seems almost to be incredible. The air was so crowded with them, for the space of three or four acres, that millions might be seen in every direction; and the branches and twigs of the trees were at the same time covered with others that were not upon the wing."

The complete account of Cook's life and voyages written by Andrew Kippis, a contemporary in 1788, has been reprinted recently under the title "Captain Cook's Voyages" (New York, 1925).—H. B. W.